E/1999/41
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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

REPORT ON THE TWENTIETH SESSION
27-28 May 1999

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS: 1999

SUPPLEMENT No. 21

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The twentieth session of the Commission was held at the ministerial level pursuant to its resolution 196 (XVII) of 31 May 1994 on the frequency of sessions of the Commission and the Technical Committee, in particular paragraph 2, the text of which is as follows:

> "Decides also that Commission sessions shall be held in odd years, starting in 1995, in conformity with the budget session of the United Nations and with the cycle to monitor the progress achieved in the programmes of work of the system."

2. The present report, which covers the work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) at its twentieth session, held at United Nations House in Beirut on 27 and 28 May 1999, was adopted unanimously by the Commission at the final meeting of the session, held on 28 May 1999.

3. It was the intention of the secretariat to focus attention on the essential points discussed; consequently, the final report on the session reflects the principal issues taken up, briefly summarizing the discussions that took place on each agenda item but not presenting in detail the views expressed by individual representatives.

I. ISSUES CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

4. At its second plenary meeting, held on 27 May 1999, the Commission adopted a number of resolutions and decided to submit them to the Economic and Social Council for action or to bring them to its attention. Their texts are as follows:

218 (XX). Changes introduced in the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1998-1999

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Having noted with satisfaction the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 1998-1999,

Having taken cognizance of the changes introduced by the secretariat in programme activities,

Having studied the reasons and justifications for those changes, which relate to the cancellation, reformulation, addition or postponement of activities or outputs,

Aware of the need for a certain degree of flexibility in the implementation of the programme of work in order that it may include new issues directly related to it,

Approves the changes introduced in the programme of work as they appear in the annex to the report on the progress made during 1998 in the implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 1998-1999.[1]

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

219 (XX). Frequency of sessions of the sectoral committees of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Conscious of the need for uniform frequency of the sessions of all the sectoral subcommittees,

Recalling resolution 212 (XIX) of 7 May 1997, which provides for the holding of the sessions of the Committee on Water Resources annually,

Recalling also resolution 214 (XIX) of 7 May 1997, which provides for the establishment of a technical committee on liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization in the countries of the ESCWA region, whose meetings are to be held annually,

Recalling further that the ESCWA secretariat can provide support and advice to the member States on request during years in which no sessions of the sectoral subcommittees are held,

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[1] E/ESCWA/C.1/20/4(Part I).

Realizing that the sectoral subcommittees can hold special sessions as needed, in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of ESCWA,

1. *Approves* the amendment of resolutions 212 (XIX) and 214 (XIX) to the effect that the sessions of the Committee on Water Resources and the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region shall be held biennially rather than annually;

2. *Emphasizes* that the sessions of all the sectoral committees shall be held once every two years.

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

220 (XX). Adoption of the Beirut Declaration

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling its resolution 217 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 on a call for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, in particular paragraph 3, in which the Commission invites the Governments of the member States to take the opportunity to formulate a new vision for the region in line with regional and world developments in the coming century,

Recalling also the call by the Commission for the issuance of a declaration embodying the Commission's vision of the future and its role in coordinating the policies of the member States in the economic and social spheres and broadening cooperation between them,[1]

1. *Decides* to adopt the Beirut Declaration, annexed hereto, as a new vision that defines the role and tasks of the Commission in line with regional and world developments in the coming century;

2. *Invites* the member States to take inspiration from elements of the Declaration in formulating their national policies and programmes and in strengthening international and regional cooperation between themselves;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to ensure that in future the activities of ESCWA take into account the content of the Declaration.

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

[1] E/1997/39-E/ESCWA/19/9, para. 45.

Annex

BEIRUT DECLARATION

**THE REGION OF WESTERN ASIA
PREPARING FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

We the representatives of the Governments of the member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, meeting in Beirut on 27 and 28 May 1999 at the twentieth session of the Commission and gathered here today to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary,

Acting in accordance with the desire of our Governments to assume their responsibilities towards their peoples in their aspiration towards integrated, sustainable development; stressing their originality and their contributions to civilization; believing in the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations; being aware of the development of international relations and partnership; and acting on the experience and lessons of the past, understanding the present and its dimensions, and looking confidentially to the future,

Taking the opportunity offered by the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission,

Present our vision of the role and tasks of the Commission in line with regional and world developments in the coming century, as follows:

1. The growth of globalism does not diminish or detract from the extreme importance of acting at the regional level. Nor does the global nature of problems preclude area-specific solutions and policies. In the trend towards globalism, with full respect for the sovereignty of States, regionalism cannot be bypassed. Cooperative arrangements within homogeneous groups, especially of small and medium-sized countries, represent a bridge between the national and the global. Moreover, development trends and requirements do not materialize all at once throughout the world, but rather in the form of regional waves, in which the conditions and situations peculiar to each area must be taken into account.

2. The role and functions of the Commission are based primarily on development and economic and social cooperation, the objective being to raise the level of economic activity in Western Asia and to maintain and strengthen economic relations between its member countries and other countries of the world. Such development can be achieved only to the extent that it is comprehensive, integrated and sustainable in both the economic and social spheres.

3. Recognition of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and settlement of disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law constitute the basis of a sound international community. However, the State is not capable by itself of achieving comprehensive, sustainable development unless there exists international cooperation in the economic and social fields that is based, on the one hand, on a just and comprehensive peace, security on equal terms and respect for the principles of justice and international law and, on the other hand, on international relations that are balanced in all areas and based on effective international cooperation and a genuine sense of partnership on the part of donor States and international donor institutions.

4. The increasing importance of regional cooperation in the economic and social fields places a great responsibility on the Commission. As part of the United Nations system, the Commission is the natural place for dealing with issues related to such cooperation, for it is not merely a regional arrangement for expressing the needs and particularities of the region to which it belongs, but also the embodiment, at the regional level, of the universal purposes and principles set forth in the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations.

5. The future of the region, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, requires its transformation into a zone of economic and social cooperation and mutual respect of all for the rights and interests of the peoples of the region in an atmosphere of a just and comprehensive peace, security on a basis of equality, and economic and social stability. These goals can be achieved only if cooperation is strengthened between the members of the Commission, the United Nations and international financial institutions and the following objective conditions are met:

(a) The achievement of a just and comprehensive peace, security on equal terms and stability in the region of Western Asia through the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions, and full respect for international legitimacy and the foundations and principles of the peace process, foremost among them being the principle of land for peace and respect for the rights of peoples and their legitimate aspirations;

(b) The creation of an environment that will stimulate economic and social cooperation and development in all domains, including cooperation between the countries of the region in the areas of water, environment and energy, which calls for a comprehensive view that takes into account the balancing of national needs and global requirements and is based on integration of the various aspects of sustainable human development, with recognition of the mutually supportive roles of an effective State administration, an efficient private sector and a sound civil society;

(c) The exertion of efforts to integrate the ESCWA member States into the international economic and trading system by assisting them in dealing with the rules and principles on which it is based and heightening the advantages and at the same time limiting the drawbacks that might be involved, by the establishment of a dialogue with the international organizations concerned;

(d) The promotion of democracy and respect for human rights, including the right to life, the right of self-determination and the right to development, and fundamental freedoms within a context of respect for national and regional characteristics and different religious, cultural and historical values. Achieving complementarity between freedom and responsibility at all levels in a State based on institutions and law constitutes a fundamental guarantee for enabling the region to continue its creative participation in the civilization of humankind;

(e) The development of the role of the Commission through support for its technical bodies and the obtainment of adequate support from the United Nations system, including the financial and human resources needed to enable the Commission to carry on its activities in the best possible way in order to be able to bolster the efforts of the member States and become a basic forum in the economic and social fields with a view to promoting regional economic cooperation on a sound basis that will help to strengthen development and progress among the ESCWA member States.

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

221 (XX). Cognizance of the summaries of the reports of the six sectoral subcommittees

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Having examined the contents of the summaries of the seven reports presented by the sectoral subcommittees to the Commission at its twentieth session,

1. *Takes cognizance* of the contents of those summaries and of the observations made in respect of them by the delegations;

2. *Amends* the titles of the annexes to some of those summaries to read "statements issued by the sectoral subcommittees" instead of "declarations".

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

222 (XX). Draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2000-2001

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996 concerning programme planning, in which the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 is considered as the principle general policy directive which should serve as the framework for the formulation of the biennial programme budgets,

Noting with appreciation the consultations conducted by the ESCWA secretariat with the member States and the bodies concerned within the United Nations[1] in planning the priorities proposed by the secretariat for each of the five substantive subprogrammes,

Noting also with appreciation the consultations conducted by the ESCWA secretariat with the Advisory Committee[2] in connection with the defining of priorities for the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2000-2001,

Noting the comments and proposals made by the delegations concerning the priorities of the proposed programme of work,

1. *Reiterates* its conviction that early consultation regarding programme planning is the basic mechanism for arriving at a common view of the region's priorities and for rationalizing the activities undertaken by the various United Nations agencies;

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[1] Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat of the United Nations, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the ESCWA member States, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Children's Fund and United Nations Population Fund.

[2] The Advisory Committee is composed of the heads of the diplomatic missions or their representatives in the host country of ESCWA and a representative of the host country.

2. *Adopts* the draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2000-2001 after emendation in accordance with observations and proposals made by the delegations;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to distribute this programme to the ESCWA member States and to the United Nations bodies concerned once it has been approved by the General Assembly.

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

223 (XX). Redesignation of the Technical Committee

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/80 on the general policy-making structure of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, in which the Council recalled its resolution 1982/64 of 30 July 1982, by which it established, within the Economic Commission for Western Asia, a Standing Committee for the Programme, which it designated the Technical Committee,

Recalling also resolution 114 (IX) of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, which entrusts to the Technical Committee the task of reviewing programming issues and presenting recommendations in that regard, as a preparatory committee, to the sessions of the Commission held at the ministerial level,

Recalling further the successive establishment of six technical committees of ESCWA during the period from 1992 to 1997,

Wishing to avoid possible confusion between the name of the present Technical Committee and the names of the sectoral technical committees,

Decides to change the name of the Technical Committee to "Preparatory Committee".

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

224 (XX). Relocation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to its permanent headquarters in Beirut

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling its resolution 197 (XVII) of 31 May 1994, in which it decided to submit a recommendation to the Economic and Social Council that the permanent headquarters of the Commission should be relocated to Beirut,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/43 of 29 July 1994 on the permanent headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to take all steps necessary to effect the transfer of the permanent headquarters of the Commission to Beirut and to ensure that the transfer was financed within existing resources and primarily from extrabudgetary contributions,

Further recalling its resolution 207 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995 on facilitating the relocation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to its permanent headquarters in Beirut, in which it called on its member States to take measures to support the Secretary-General in his efforts to secure the necessary resources for the implementation of resolution 197 (XVII),

Recalling further its resolution 215 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 on facilitating the relocation of the Commission to its permanent headquarters in Beirut, in which it requested the authorities concerned within the Secretariat of the United Nations to examine the possibility of utilizing the skills of ESCWA local staff in Amman in other areas within the United Nations or of finding ways to compensate them,

Taking cognizance of the note by the Executive Secretary on the relocation of ESCWA to its permanent headquarters in Beirut,[1] which deals with all the legal, administrative, logistic and financial aspects of the transfer,

Commending the measures adopted by the secretariat for the implementation of the relocation plan in accordance with a timetable that did not affect the implementation of its programmes and took into account the needs of the staff,

Commending also the measures adopted by the Secretariat of the United Nations to utilize the skills of the local staff in Amman in other areas within the United Nations or to determine ways to compensate them,

1. *Endorses* the action taken by the secretariat for the transfer of the permanent headquarters to United Nations House in Beirut by 31 December 1997, in particular the conclusion of the Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon concerning the Headquarters of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, signed on 27 August 1997, and the Supplementary Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon relating to the Occupancy and Use of United Nations Premises in Beirut, Lebanon, signed on 9 October 1997;

2. *Endorses also* the action taken by the secretariat to facilitate the transfer of other United Nations offices and agencies in Beirut to United Nations House on 1 December 1998 and to devise internal mechanisms for the sharing of common services and related costs;[2]

3. *Endorses with satisfaction* the financial arrangements related to the move, made by the secretariat in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/43 of 29 July 1994, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the transfer was financed within existing resources and primarily from extrabudgetary contributions;

4. *Reiterates its expression of gratitude* to the Government of Lebanon for its financial contributions and its efforts to provide a headquarters that satisfies the requirements and needs of the United Nations and for its cooperation in complying with the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement signed on 27 August 1997;

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[1] E/ESCWA/20/7/Rev.1.

[2] Four tripartite memorandums of understanding relating to the occupancy and use of the United Nations premises in Beirut were signed by the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon with three United Nations bodies (the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund) on 23 November 1998 and with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization on 11 March 1999, and the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Occupancy and Use of Common Premises by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and United Nations Offices and Agencies in Beirut, Lebanon, was signed on 24 November 1998.

5. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Kuwait for its financial contribution towards the transfer of the Commission's headquarters and to the Government of Saudi Arabia for the contribution it made to support the activities of the Commission following its transfer to its permanent headquarters;

6. *Reiterates its thanks* to the Governments of Iraq and Jordan for the support offered to the Commission during its stay in Baghdad and Amman, respectively, and to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for facilitating the movement of staff and equipment through its territory.

2nd plenary meeting
27 May 1999

II. TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

5. The twentieth session of the Commission was held in Beirut on 27 and 28 May 1999. The Commission, which held three meetings during the session, discussed the items on the agenda contained in paragraph 12 of this report and submitted the resolutions it had adopted to the Economic and Social Council for action or for its information.

6. The session was attended by the following members of the Commission: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

7. No State Member of the United Nations that was not a member of the Commission participated as an observer in the work of the twentieth session.

8. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations attended the session on behalf of the Secretary-General. In addition, representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended as observers: Economic Commission for Europe; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; United Nations Environment Programme/Regional Office for West Asia; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Population Fund; International Labour Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; International Civil Aviation Organization; World Health Organization; World Bank; Universal Postal Union; World Meteorological Organization; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; and Regional Commissions New York Office.

9. Representatives of the following governmental and non-governmental organizations also attended the session as observers: Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization; Arab Organization for Agricultural Development; Arab Towns Organization; General Union of Chambers of Commerce. Industry and Agriculture of the Arab Countries; and Union of Arab Banks. In addition, a number of experts participated in their personal capacity. The representative of one non-governmental organization (NGO) having consultative status with ECOSOC also attended the session.

1. *Election of officers*

10. At its 1st meeting, held on 27 May 1999, the Commission elected His Excellency Mr. Nasser Saidi (head of the delegation of Lebanon) as Chairman of the twentieth session; His Excellency Sheikh Humaid Al-Mualla (head of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates) and His Excellency Mr. Abdul Rahim Al-Subei (head of the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic) as Vice-Chairmen; and His Excellency Mr. Farouk Kaddoomi (head of the delegation of Palestine) as Rapporteur.

2. *Credentials*

11. In accordance with rule 11 of the rules of procedure of the Commission, the credentials of the representatives as submitted to the Executive Secretary were examined by the officers and found to be in order.

3. *Agenda and organization of work*

12. At its 1st meeting, the Commission adopted the agenda and organization of work of the session as amended (see E/ESCWA/20/1 and E/ESCWA/20/2, respectively). The amended agenda is as follows:

1. Opening of the ministerial session.

2. Election of officers.

3. Adoption of the agenda and the proposed organization of work.

4. Implementation of resolution 217 (XIX), "Call for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, to be held in 1999 in conjunction with its twentieth Session, and discussion of the role of the Commission in the coming century in view of global and regional developments", and discussion of the draft Beirut Declaration.

5. Discussion and adoption of the report of the Technical Committee on its eleventh session.

6. The role of ESCWA in the coordination of the regional activities of the United Nations system.

7. Current issues of importance to the ESCWA region. Trade efficiency in ESCWA member countries: a comprehensive study.

8. Relocation of ESCWA to its permanent headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon.

9. Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission.

10. Date and venue of the twenty-first session of the Commission.

11. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twentieth session.

B. OPENING OF THE SESSION

13. The opening meeting of the session was held under the patronage of the President of Lebanon, General Emile Lahoud, who was represented at the meeting by the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Salim Hoss. Attending the session on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations was his Special Representative, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi.

14. The Executive Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Hazem El-Beblawi, delivered a statement in which he thanked the Government and people of Lebanon for providing a handsome building to serve as the headquarters of the Commission and the home of the United Nations. He also expressed his sincere gratitude to the member States that had contributed financially towards facilitating the relocation of ESCWA to its new headquarters, in particular the Governments of Lebanon, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. He renewed his thanks and appreciation to the Governments of Iraq and Jordan for acting as hosts to the Commission in Baghdad and Amman and expressed the hope that the Commission's return to Beirut augured the return of peace and stability to the region so that the Commission might assist it in pursuing its course of building and giving.

15. The Executive Secretary drew attention to the significance of the historic moment at which the session was being held, coinciding as it did with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission. The previous quarter of a century, he said, had been rich in events and developments and had at the same time abounded in crises and difficulties. It had witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war. He referred to the recent technological revolution in the field of information and communications that had swept through the world, saying that the new inventions were moving the world towards globalization and a new reality that involved opportunities and possibilities, but at the same time perils and challenges. He went on to review the conditions that had prevailed in the region over the previous 25 years, from a

promising state of growth and abundance to the faltering of the peace process, a drop in raw materials prices and, in many countries of the region, a decline in income.

16. In view of all those global and regional developments, it was essential to pause and examine the past and to prepare for a future in which things would be different. In accordance with the request of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, ESCWA had called for the holding of a regional conference to examine the problems of the region and its role in the next century.

17. He stressed the important role of regionalism as a link between the national and the global in the light of the trend towards increased globalization. ESCWA, as a regional commission, enjoyed a twofold advantage, for it was able to deal with geo-economic problems with a maximum of impartiality and professional commitment while upholding the universal values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, thus ensuring regional development in full harmony with the principles and objectives of the international community.

18. In connection with defining a clear vision of the future of the region in keeping with its heritage and its gifts to civilization, the Executive Secretary stressed that peace and security, comprehensive development, democracy and respect for human rights were not merely goals pursued by the United Nations, but the basis of the future stability of the region. Peace was the basis of international cooperation, and it would not prevail or abide in the region unless it was a comprehensive peace on all fronts and a just peace for all concerned. Together with peace and security it was essential to exalt human dignity, he said, emphasizing that the encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without discrimination, was one of the fundamental purposes of the United Nations. It had become an incontestable fact that democracy and respect for human rights played a fundamental role in the promotion of peace and development alike.

19. Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi then read out a message from Mr. Kofi Annan, in which the Secretary-General mentioned the Commission's many travels and relocations and expressed sincere thanks on the part of the United Nations to Iraq and Jordan for their generosity as hosts to the Commission as well as heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Lebanon for providing ESCWA with a new headquarters and to the member States that had helped finance the relocation of ESCWA to that headquarters.

20. In his message, the Secretary-General stated that ESCWA played a key role in coordinating the activities carried out by United Nations entities throughout the region. He said that the Commission was uniquely qualified to assist the member States in addressing emerging regional and geo-economic challenges and to complement other regional groupings, while addressing the shared geo-economic concerns of the States of the region.

21. The Secretary-General said in his message that the studies carried out by ESCWA in crucial areas such as population, human development and the advancement of women benefited the United Nations and the region alike. He alluded to the Commission's annual *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region*, which, he said, represented a prodigious endeavour that the United Nations was proud to publish.

22. He said that ESCWA was active in providing technical assistance on the ground, with regular visits by its experts and advisers to the member States to provide technical guidance and know-how in fields such as statistics and national accounts, social development, technology, environment, energy and telecommunications. In view of the vital importance of the issue of water for all the countries of the region, ESCWA was expected to play an ever-greater role in that field as well.

23. The Secretary-General also said in his message that ESCWA was playing a key role in the creation of an integrated transport system linking the countries of the region, thus facilitating intraregional trade, promoting greater economic integration in the region, connecting the countries of the region with

neighbouring regions and further integrating them into the world economy. He referred to the commitment of the United Nations, since its inception, to the achievement of peace and also to its commitment to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), which still remained the framework for all efforts towards achieving peace.

24. He commended the role played by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in alleviating the suffering of Palestinian refugees; its services in the fields of education, health care and relief for millions of refugees; and its promotion of the economic and social development of the occupied territories, in spite of the shortage of funds. He appealed to donor States to be generous in offering much-needed resources to the Agency.

25. The Secretary-General concluded his statement by saying that when he had visited the new ESCWA building, he could see the gateway to a promising future for the entire region—a future he hoped could be built with the help of the United Nations.

26. He pledged that the United Nations would do all it could to help promote peace and development in the region.

27. The Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Salim Hoss, delivered a statement in which he welcomed all those present to Lebanon for the twentieth session of ESCWA. He emphasized the desire of the Government and people of Lebanon to restore the country's role as a cultural beacon and a focus of cooperation among the countries of the region. Such was the role of Lebanon: thus had it been in the past and thus would it be in the future.

28. He said that for the region, the previous quarter of a century had been an extraordinarily difficult period marked by extreme contradictions that combined elements of hope and optimism, on the one hand, and frustration and regression, on the other hand. It had been a period in which phenomenal financial possibilities had emerged and the first glimmers of peace had appeared on the remote horizon, yet also a period that had witnessed wars, a subsequent setback in the peace process and a decline in revenues. He mentioned the changes that had taken place in the world's physiognomy: a decline in the importance of frontiers, the removal of barriers and the fall of the Berlin wall. The world, he said, had become like a fast train: whoever missed it was left behind and completely forgotten. It was a world that cared only about the powerful, in which there was no room for the weak or the retiring, a world ruled by the law of competition and efficiency in which timid, faint echoes of compassion and justice reverberated from afar, more akin to nostalgia for the past than an expression of the realities of the age.

29. He said that after all the country had suffered in recent years, the Government of Lebanon was making every effort to proceed at full speed with the process of building and reconstruction within a framework of economic discipline, in a State governed by institutions and the rule of law.

30. He emphasized that Lebanon, being desirous of ensuring the necessary controls and guarantees for building and reconstruction, remained faithful to its principles and its traditions, in particular economic freedom. The various aspects of that freedom, especially support for private enterprise, respect for property, the free transfer of funds, the guaranteeing of investments, the soundness of financial institutions and adherence to recognized banking practices, were firmly established traditions that Lebanon had respected at all times, even when conditions had been at their most difficult and their most savage.

31. He stated that while Lebanon could live only in freedom, it would thrive only with regional and international cooperation; there could be no future for a Lebanon turned in on itself and isolated from its Arab environment and its global environment.

C. MAIN TOPICS OF DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

1. *Implementation of resolution 217 (XIX), "Call for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, to be held in 1999 in conjunction with its twentieth session, and discussion of the role of the Commission in the coming century in view of global and regional developments"* (Agenda item 4)

32. The Commission adopted the text of a declaration entitled "The region of Western Asia: preparing for the twenty-first century" (Beirut Declaration) (E/ESCWA/C.1/20/5/Add.6/Rev.4), subject to the reservation expressed by the Iraqi delegation concerning the part of paragraph 3 relating to peace.

2. *Discussion and adoption of the final report of the Technical Committee on its eleventh session* (Agenda item 5)

33. The Executive Secretary gave a brief presentation on the activities of the Commission and presented the report of the Technical Committee (E/ESCWA/20/4) for discussion by the representatives of the member countries. No observations were made regarding the report of the Technical Committee, which was adopted as submitted. In addition, seven resolutions were adopted in the form in which they appear at the beginning of the present report.

3. *The role of ESCWA in the coordination of the regional activities of the United Nations system* (Agenda item 6)

34. The Executive Secretary gave a brief presentation of document E/ESCWA/20/5 in which he drew attention to the increasing importance of coordination and the avoidance of duplication owing to the scantness of available financial resources. He explained the mechanisms agreed upon for achieving that coordination, pointing out that it was the UNDP Resident Representative who was responsible for United Nations activities nationally. At the global level, there was an organ presided over by the Secretary-General that included the chiefs of United Nations agencies throughout the world. Regionally, the task of coordination was undertaken by the regional commissions. Regional meetings chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General had been held at the headquarters of the five regional commissions to discuss systems of coordination among the various United Nations entities. The first such meeting had been held in the ESCWA region in March 1999. At that meeting it had been agreed that the role of ESCWA as coordinator of United Nations activities in the region should be emphasized. ESCWA had been the first regional commission to undertake follow-up of the coordination process, through a meeting of the Regional Inter-agency Coordination Group held in April 1999.

35. An observation relating to the language of the note presented under agenda item 6 and of all ESCWA notes was made concerning the use of the Arabic word *qutri*, which lent itself to confusion with *qatari*, the adjective of nationality of Qatar,* and a solution to that problem was requested. Following a discussion between the various delegations, it was decided that the matter should be left to the Executive Secretary, but that during the current session the word *watani* (national) should be used in lieu of *qutri*.

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* As short vowels are generally omitted in Arabic writing, the words *qutri* ("national", or "country" used adjectivally, as in "country programme") and *qatari* ("of Qatar") both appear in Arabic as *qtri*, only the context indicating the appropriate pronunciation, and hence the appropriate meaning.

4. *Current issues of importance to the ESCWA region. Trade efficiency in ESCWA member countries: a comprehensive study*
(Agenda item 7)

36. The Executive Secretary recalled that the ministerial session had in the past requested the ESCWA secretariat to prepare for each session a study on a vital issue of concern to the region. The issue selected for the current year was trade efficiency in the ESCWA member countries.

37. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on that issue based on document E/ESCWA/20/6. She stated that the development of international trade, which had come to rank high among national priorities after the conclusion of the Uruguay Round talks and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), could not be achieved through the mere adoption of the principles of free trade, but also required the introduction of substantial improvements in the manner of concluding commercial transactions. To improve procedures, it was essential to identify obstacles and define possible solutions, which implied, among other things, the use of the latest technological developments, the application of the best practices through the simplification and integration of all trade procedures, and the sharing of benefits by all participants in a commercial transaction.

38. The representative of the secretariat mentioned that ESCWA had completed a comprehensive study in six parts on trade efficiency in the countries of the region, covering commercial practices, trade information, customs, banking and insurance, transport and communications. Upon the completion of the study, an informatics seminar on the subject had been held. The seminar had issued a plan of action whose recommendations included the adoption of the principle of trade efficiency as a goal in a clearly delineated foreign-trade policy; the creation of a national committee in each country, with balanced representation of the State and the private sector; coordination among the national committees at the regional level; the rapid achievement of regional coordination in three main areas (customs, transit and transport); and the implementation of a policy aimed at increased participation in economic development by small and medium-sized enterprises.

39. During the ensuing discussion, one representative inquired about the role of ESCWA in preparing member States for negotiations with the WTO, mentioning that Yemen had been admitted to the WTO as an observer and needed an expert to assist it in negotiating. He voiced the desire of his Government to learn about the experiences of other Arab countries that had conducted negotiations with the WTO.

40. The Executive Secretary, commenting on the preceding statement, mentioned that ESCWA had offered assistance in that area collectively, in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in the form of studies, meetings, workshops and courses. He mentioned the meeting for the Arab States shortly to be held by UNCTAD in Geneva. He informed the participants that ESCWA had created two new posts for regional advisers within the Commission, one on trade and the other on communications, so ESCWA would be better able to participate in the formulation of questions relating to electronic commerce (e-commerce). He said that all regional advisers were at the disposal of the member States whenever their services were required.

41. The representative of Qatar stated that his Government was also willing to offer its expertise to any State preparing for negotiations with the WTO. He pointed out that the question of accession to the WTO Agreement was not merely economic but political as well, and that it was essential to show initiative, specially in the phase following accession. He said that the technical side of assistance to States in that regard must be provided by ESCWA.

42. The representative of Kuwait, speaking of his country's experience, said that Kuwait had been the first Arab country to join the WTO and placed Kuwait's experience and expertise at the disposal of the member States. He expressed his Government's support for ESCWA in that area. He referred to the

growing urgency of dealing with the matter, stating that studies and the exchange of information were not enough, for the question required very careful scrutiny.

43. The representative of Jordan said that the manner of negotiating was an extremely delicate point; he referred specifically to the question of intellectual property, especially in the Arab region. He requested that any studies done on the subject by member States should be distributed to the other States.

44. The representative of Egypt, speaking of his Government's experience, said that the Government would be pleased to assist other States in preparing for the negotiations. He pointed out that the Beirut Declaration touched on the question, the report of the Technical Committee referred to it, and Lebanon was to act as host to a meeting on the same question, all of which showed that ESCWA was according the proper attention to the subject.

45. The representative of Bahrain said that concern with the WTO was not confined to the accession phase, but also included the question of how to benefit from accession. He thanked the ESCWA secretariat for the assistance and training it had provided to the competent departments of the Ministry of Trade of his country to enable it to take advantage of its membership in the WTO.

46. The representative of UNCTAD mentioned that the Asian ministerial meeting was to be held in Beirut in August 1999 to prepare for the tenth session of UNCTAD and would provide an opportunity for member States to present their experience and expertise. He stressed the importance of preparing for the negotiations for accession to the WTO and commended the study done by ESCWA on trade efficiency in the ESCWA member countries, congratulating the secretariat on the excellence and comprehensiveness of the study.

47. The Chairman of the session indicated that there was a need to create an office at ESCWA to deal with the subject of trade efficiency and a need for symposia at which countries might present their experience and expertise in that area in order to benefit other countries.

5. *Relocation of ESCWA to its permanent headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon*
(Agenda item 8)

48. The Executive Secretary presented document E/ESCWA/20/7/Rev.1. He thanked the Government of Lebanon for the facilities offered to the Commission, which enabled it to hold large meetings and even to host meetings other than its own.

6. *Date and venue of the twenty-first session of the Commission*
(Agenda item 10)

49. One of the delegations proposed that the twenty-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia should be held at ESCWA headquarters in Beirut in the latter part of May 2001.

50. One of the delegations proposed that the issue of importance addressed during the coming session should be "the year 2001 as the year of cultural dialogue". The Executive Secretary stated that ESCWA would consider the proposal as a recommendation regarding the choice of the issue for the session.

7. *Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission*
(Agenda item 9)

51. The Executive Secretary, in introducing this item, said that the occasion was not merely one of celebration, but also required the presentation of a critique of the past and a vision of the future, including an assessment of what had taken place both in the region and in the Commission. He proposed that Mr. Riad Tabbarah and Mr. Samir Makdisi should begin with a review of the principal economic and social

developments that had taken place in the region, a detailed account of which could be found in the study entitled "The ESCWA region: twenty-five years, 1974 to 1999: political, economic and social developments" (E/ESCWA/1999/4). Messrs. Nabil Al-Khatib, Ismat Kittani and Edward Ghorra would speak of the developments experienced by the Commission since its creation, which could be found in a study entitled "ESCWA (1974-1999): twenty-five years of service to the region's development" (E/ESCWA/1999/2). Thereafter, a discussion of that review should take place, whereupon the session would conclude with the reading out of the Beirut Declaration.

52. Before the presentation of the studies, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, expressed his pleasure at attending the session and at the great success with which it had been crowned. He referred to the regional hearings in preparation for the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations, which constituted the first of a series of such hearings, to be followed by hearings in all the other regional commissions in preparation for the session of the General Assembly in the year 2000, in which heads of State and Government would participate. On behalf of the Secretary-General, he expressed his thanks to all those present for their valuable efforts.

53. The head of the delegation of Egypt expressed his country's view regarding a statement contained in the second study mentioned above and relating to the historical background of the establishment of ESCWA to the effect, he said, that the creation of the State of Israel had rendered the borders mentioned in General Assembly resolution 181 of 29 November 1947 outdated owing to the passage of time. He expressed his belief that the existence of that expression required him to state for the record the position of his country regarding the report. United Nations resolutions, he said, did not lapse with the passage of time, nor were they voided by States' rejection or acceptance of them, even if those States were the parties concerned.

54. He also disagreed with the statement in the study that it was not intellectual and cultural heritage that imparted to the region its special character.

55. The Executive Secretary replied that the observation was entirely correct and that he appreciated and endorsed it. He pointed out that the study had been done by researchers from outside ESCWA and contained the written disclaimer that the views contained in it were those of the authors and did not necessarily reflect the views of ESCWA.

56. A former Executive Secretary pointed out, with regard to the contents of the working papers, that nothing had been presented on 1991, during which he had been Executive Secretary of the Commission, as if the Commission had done nothing during that year. He felt that the Commission had failed to take into account the efforts he had made to reassemble ESCWA employees, at that time scattered throughout the world; the efforts made by the member States; and all the hardships that the staff members and their families had suffered, not to mention conditions that had threatened the very existence of ESCWA.

57. Another former Executive Secretary praised the work undertaken by ESCWA and commended the efforts made by the current Executive Secretary to develop the role of the Commission. He said he would like the current session to be not merely an occasion for inquiring into the past, but also an occasion for pausing at the threshold of a new millennium. He expressed the view that the Beirut Declaration highlighted factors that lay outside the scope of ESCWA, stressing that he would like to find in it some expression about cooperation or about the intention of the States to reaffirm their commitment to providing whatever the Commission required. The Commission was not merely a headquarters; it was essential for States to adopt the Commission in the full sense of the word and to adopt its orientations, for that, in his view, was of the greatest importance.

58. The Executive Secretary referred to all the meritorious efforts of the former Executive Secretaries, without which the Commission might not have survived at all.

59. Regarding the developments witnessed by the region, Mr. Riad Tabbarah, presenting a synopsis of the social portion of the first study mentioned above, said that as a result of the oil boom that had occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, incomes of the countries of the region had become like those of the industrialized countries, though the social indicators for the former, especially in the fields of education and health, had remained similar to those of developing countries. ESCWA had made efforts to restore the balance between the economic and social aspects. Achievements had subsequently been registered in the field of education, with a decline in the illiteracy rate from 82 to 20 per cent and an increase in the number of universities from 30 to 80. Despite those quantitative accomplishments, there were still some deficiencies in terms of quality, inasmuch as technical education was not accorded due importance owing to the emphasis placed on academic learning.

60. Mr. Samir Makdisi, presenting a synopsis of the economic portion of the same study, said that the major challenges faced by the region consisted in three external factors, namely, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the absence of a united negotiating front among the Arab countries, and the drop in petroleum prices. He mentioned four main developments: a decline in the share of oil revenue in gross domestic product, the growth of the export sector, an increase in the share of the industrial sector, and a decrease in the share of the government sector. He said that as a result of the considerable progress achieved in the field of education, specialized managerial staff had come into being in the various fields. Nevertheless, the still limited nature of technical capacities in the Arab countries hampered their participation in industrial development. He pointed out that most of the countries of the region had rid themselves of protective tariff restrictions. In spite of the process of privatization, the public sector was still the primary employer. Economic cooperation among the Arab countries, he said, had not yet materialized in the form of an Arab common market, but under the existing conditions of globalization, it was imperative that the Arab countries should join together in a single economic bloc in order to meet the challenges posed by other economic alliances.

61. Mr. Edward Ghorra, reviewing a survey of the diligent efforts made with a view to the establishment of ESCWA, stated that credit for the establishment of ESCWA had been due first of all to the Egyptian delegation to the General Assembly, whose endeavours had led to the adoption by the Assembly of its resolution 1941 (XVIII), dated 11 December 1963, in which it had recommended the creation of a technical assistance coordination unit in the United Nations Office in Beirut. He added that, as the representative of Lebanon to the Economic and Social Council, he had drawn the attention of the Council, in 1973, to the fact that the Arab countries of Western Asia were the only States Members of the United Nations that did not belong to a regional commission and that the United Nations Office in Beirut was not an intergovernmental body and did not have the power to present recommendations on behalf of the region's Governments or to deal with matters relating to bilateral assistance, and had proposed the creation of a commission for the region. On the basis of that proposal, the Economic and Social Council had adopted its resolution 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973, calling for the establishment of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA).

8. *Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twentieth session*
(Agenda item 11)

62. The Commission adopted the draft report on its twentieth session on the understanding that the agreed amendments thereto would be made.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. ESCWA MEMBERS

Bahrain

H.E. Mr. Abdul Nabbi al-Shu'ala
Minister of Labour and Social Affairs

Mr. Sadiq al-Sheihabi
Assistant Undersecretary, Social Affairs
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Mr. Abdel Razak Zain al-Abedin
Director of Foreign Trade
Ministry of Commerce

Mr. Abdullah Mohamed Saad al-Romahi
Counsellor
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Sabah al-Dawsari
Director, Office of the Minister
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Mr. Muhammad Yusif Salimin
Third Secretary
Embassy of Bahrain in the Syrian Arab Republic

Egypt

H.E. Mr. Sayed Kassem el-Masry
Assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Suleiman Awad
Minister Plenipotentiary
Deputy to the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Alaa Eldin Zakaria Youssef
Second Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Yasir 'Alawi
Third Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Mohamed Yehia Negm
Third Secretary
Embassy of Egypt in Lebanon

Iraq

Mr. Hasan Abd al-Mun'im al-Khattab
President
Planning Commission

Mr. Nabil Abdullah al-Janabi
Chargé d'affaires
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First Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Jordan

H.E. Mr. Muhammad 'Asfur
Minister of Industry and Trade

H.E. Mr. Anmar al-Hmoud
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Mr. Salem Odeh Ghawi
Assistant Secretary-General
Ministry of Planning

Mr. Sufuyan al-Qudah
Consul of Jordan in Lebanon

Mr. Mohammad Abdalla al-Shoha
Economic Researcher
Ministry of Planning

Kuwait

H.E. Mr. Ali Mussa al-Mussa
Minister of Planning
Minister of State for Administrative Development

Kuwait (*continued*)

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Ministry of Planning

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Chief, Secretariat Unit

Mr. Hamad M.H. Monawer
Assistant Undersecretary of Planning Affairs
Ministry of Planning

Mr. Abd al-Rahman Khalil Ibrahim
Director, Economic Department
Ministry of Planning

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Mr. Jaber A. Qabazard
Administrative Researcher
Ministry of Planning

Lebanon

H.E. Mr. Nasser Saidi
Minister of Economy and Trade

H.E. Mr. Mohamed M. Abdelsattar Issa
Director, Department of International Organizations, Conferences and Cultural Relations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Charbel Mansour Stephan
Head, Conference Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Habib Khawaja
Director of Social Development
Ministry of Social Affairs

Mr. Samir el-Chami
Director of Plant Resources
Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. Muhammad Ali Musa
Adviser to the Prime Minister

Mr. Hassan Muhyi al-Din Sha`ban
Technical Adviser
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Georges el-Khoury
Chief, Department of Economic Studies and Industrial Development
Ministry of Industry

Mr. Ali Ahmad Sarhal
Chief, Department of Programming
Council for Development and Reconstruction

Ms. Najwa Yaacoub
Statistician
Directorate of Central Statistics

Oman

Mr. Mohammed Nasser al-Khusaibi
Secretary-General, Ministry of National Economy

Mr. Muhammad bin Khalil al-Jazmi
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Embassy of Oman in Lebanon

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Ministry of National Economy

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Ministry of Finance

Palestine

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Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Zuhdi Labib Tarazi
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Political Department, Palestine Liberation Organization

Mr. Samih Hussein Karakra
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Palestine (*continued*)

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Mr. Mahir al-Kard
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Mr. Ahmad Arif Aliyah
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Mr. Mohammed Ghadayah
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Qatar

H.E. Mr Ahmad ben Abdullah al-Mahmood
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Ali al-Nouemi
Ambassador
Embassy of Qatar in Lebanon

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Saed Yoseph al-Suleiti
Protocol Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Ahmed Saleh al-Mohannadi
Head, International Economic Relations Section
Ministry of Finance, Economy and Trade

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Nizar bin 'Ubaid Madani
Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Mr. Ahmad al-Kihaimi
Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Lebanon

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General Manager, Office of the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Mr. Mohammed Fida'a el-Din al-Idriss
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Mr. Abdullah al-Nafisa
Economic Adviser
Ministry of Commerce

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Ministry of Industry and Electricity

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General Manager for Community Development
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Ministry of Finance and National Economy

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Saudi Fund for Development

Syrian Arab Republic

H.E. Mr. Abdul Rahim al-Subei
Minister of State, Planning Affairs

Mr. Tawfik Ismail
Deputy Minister of State, Planning Affairs

Mr. Ibrahim Ali
Director, Central Bureau of Statistics

Mr. Ibrahim Issa
Director, Economic Administration
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Ahmad Hassan
Deputy Director, Scientific and Technical Cooperation
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United Arab Emirates

H.E. Sheikh Humaid bin Ahmed al-Mualla
Minister of Planning

Mr. Ahmed Abdullah Mansour
Deputy Minister of Planning

Mr. Ahmed al-Sayed
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Mr. Muhammad Salih Shilwah
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Computer Programmer
Ministry of Planning

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Ministry of Planning and Development

Mr. Nabil Ali Shaiban
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Ministry of Planning and Development

Mr. Abdullah al-Muhalwi
Minister Plenipotentiary
Embassy of Yemen in Lebanon

B. Office of the Secretary-General

Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi
Special Representative of the
Secretary-General

C. Regional commissions of the United Nations

Economic Commission for Europe

Mr. Yves Berthelot
Executive Secretary

Ms. Susan Bartolo
Secretary of the Commission

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Reynaldo Bajraj
Deputy Executive Secretary

Economic Commission for Africa

Mr. K. Amoako
Executive Secretary

Mr. Ejeviome Eloho Otobo
Senior Policy Analyst

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Mr. Hazem El-Beblawi
Executive Secretary

Mr. Ibrahim Awad
Secretary of the Commission

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (*continued*)

Mr. Labeeb Abdunnur
Chief, Statistics Division

Mr. Akil Akil
Chief, Social Development Issues and Policies Division

Mr. Zeki Fattah
Chief, Economic Development Issues and Policies Division

Mr. Ahmed Farahat
Chief, Sectoral Issues and Policies Division

Mr. Omar Touqan
Chief, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment Division

Mr. Ali Khalifa Al-Kuwari
Chief, Technical Cooperation Division

Mr. Mario Paz y Mino
Chief, Administrative Services Division

Ms. Thouka al-Khalidi
Chief, Programme Planning and Coordination Unit

Ms. Huda Osseiran
Programme Management Officer

D. United Nations Secretariat bodies, specialized agencies and other organizations in the United Nations system

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Mr. Awni Behnam
Director Intergovernmental Support Service
Secretary of the Trade and Development Board

United Nations Environment Programme

Mr. Habib Nicolas El-Habr
Deputy Regional Director
Regional Office for West Asia

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Ms. Tanja Thonhauser
Associate Protection Officer

Ms. Huda Itani
Administrative Programme Assistant

United Nations and Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

Mr. Alfredo Muccio
Director of Affairs
Lebanon

United Nations Children's Fund

Mr. Basil Ammari
Representative
Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

United Nations Development Programme

Mr. Fawaz Fokeladeh
Director
Regional Bureau for Arab States
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Mr. Adel Abdellatif
Special Advisor to the Assistant Administrator

Mr. Christian de Clerq
Senior Advisor to the United Nations Resident Coordinator

United Nations Population Fund

Mr. Atef Khalifa
Director, Country Support Team for Arab States and Europe

International Labour Organization

Ms. Azita Berar Awad
Deputy Regional Director
Lebanon

Mr. Shaza Zafer Al-Jundi
Senior Programme and Administrative Support Officer
Regional Office for Arab States

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Mr. Amor Ben Romdhane
Representative
Lebanon

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Mr. Martin Hadlow
Director, Amman Office
Representative for Jordan and Iraq

Mr. Abdalla Ramadan Bubtana
Director, Doha Office
UNESCO Representative for the Ara States of the Gulf

Mr. Victor Billeh
Director
Regional Office for Education in the Arab States
Lebanon

International Civil Aviation Organization

Mr. Ahmed Zerhouni
Regional Director, Middle East Office
Cairo Office

Mr. M. Zarroug
Regional Air Transport Officer
Cairo Office

World Health Organization

Dr. Abdelhay Mechbal
Representative
Lebanon

World Bank

Mr. John Wetter
Country Officer and Country Economist

Universal Postal Union

Mr Hashem Al-Qudah
Regional Adviser

World Meteorological Organization

Dr. Selim Catafago
Advisor to the Permanent Representative
Lebanon

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Mr. Nilmadhab Mohanty
Managing Director

Mr. Giuseppe Populi
Chief and Acting Secretary
Policy Making Organs

Mr. Mehdi Hafedh
Representative
Lebanon

Regional Commissions New York Office

Ms. Sulafa Ibrahim Al-Bassam
Chief

E. Former Executive Secretaries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Mr. Mohammed Said el-Nabulsi
Former Executive Secretary

Mr. Tayseer Abdel Jaber
Former Executive Secretary

F. Governmental and non-governmental organizations

General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of the Arab Countries

Mr. Burhan Dajani
Secretary-General

Union of Arab Banks

Mr. Adnan al-Hindi
Secretary-General

Mr. Fouad Shaker Sayed Ahmed
Assistant Secretary-General

Arab Organization for Agricultural Development

Mr. Al-Taj Fadl Allah Abd al-Rahim
Deputy Director General

Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization

Mr. Tal'at al-Zafir
Director General

Mr. Ahmed Abbas
Director, Consultancy and Industrial Development Department

Arab Towns Organization

Mr. Salim 'Itani
Member, Municipal Council of Beirut
Organization Representative

G. EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS

Mr. Abdullah al-Alem
Expert

Mr. Nabil al-Khatib
Expert

Mr. Riad Tabbarah
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Center for Development Studies and Projects (MADMA)

H.E. Mr. Edward Ghorra
Cercle des Ambassadeurs du Liban

H. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS HAVING CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Mr. Kamal Alwan
Interfaith International

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION AT ITS TWENTIETH SESSION

Symbol	Agenda item	Title
E/ESCWA/20/L.1	3	Provisional agenda
E/ESCWA/20/L.1/Add.1	3	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ESCWA/20/L.2	4	Proposed organization of work
E/ESCWA/20/3	5	Invitation to States Members of the United Nations and/or of the specialized agencies not members of the Commission to participate in the capacity of observer in the twentieth session of the Commission (note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ESCWA/20/4	6	Report of the Technical Committee on the work of its eleventh session
E/ESCWA/20/5	7	The role of ESCWA in the coordination of the regional activities of the United Nations system (note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ESCWA/20/6	8	Current issues of importance to the ESCWA region. Trade efficiency in ESCWA member countries: a comprehensive study (note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ESCWA/20/7/Rev.1	9	Relocation of ESCWA to its permanent headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon (note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ESCWA/20/8	10	Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission (note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ESCWA/20/9	13	Report on the twentieth session

Annex III

LIST OF PRINCIPAL PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE COMMISSION SINCE ITS NINETEENTH SESSION

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/2	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1996-1997
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/2/Add.1	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1996-1997. Part II: Tourism and the Economies of ESCWA Member States
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/3	Role of Financial Markets in Privatization in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/5	Institutional Aspects of Privatization: A Comparative Approach in the ESCWA Region
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/6	Challenges and Opportunities of the New International Trade Agreements (Uruguay Round) for ESCWA Member Countries in Selected Sectors: Crude Oil, Petroleum Products and Petrochemicals
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/8	Impact of the Peace Process on Trade in Services: The Tourism Sector in the ESCWA Region, Case Studies on Egypt, Jordan and Palestine
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/10	Follow-Up Study on Trade Policy Aspects of Environmental Measures in the ESCWA Member Countries: Case Studies on the Textiles Industry in Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/13	Impact of Economic Reform Policies on Poverty in Selected ESCWA Member Countries: Egypt, Jordan and the Republic of Yemen
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/15	Interlinkages between Trade, Investment and the Transfer of Technology: Implications in the Case of an Arab Common Market
E/ESCWA/ED/1997/16	Review of the Progress made by the Republic of Yemen in the Implementation of the New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s
E/ESCWA/POP/1997/6	Demographic and Related Socio-Economic Data Sheets, No. 9 – 1997
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1	Assessment of Privatization of the Electric Power Sector in Selected ESCWA Member Countries Volume I: Overview

Symbol	Title
E/ESCWA/ENR/1997/1/Add.1	Volume II: Case-Study of Egypt
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